

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims shall replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims

Claims 1-51 (Canceled)

52. (Currently amended) A method of operation of an electronic checkout system having a point of sale (POS) terminal coupled to a data reader and an EAS system, the method comprising:

operating in an automatic activation mode whereby the EAS system is automatically activated in response to a signal from the data reader of good read of a product code;

operating in a manual activation mode whereby the EAS system is manually activated by action of an operator;

detecting a manual activation of the EAS system to deactivate an EAS tag; and

storing an indication of the detected manual activation of the EAS system.

53. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 52 wherein said detecting step occurs in the EAS system and further comprising transmitting an indication of the detected manual activation of the EAS system to the POS terminal or host system.

54. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 53 and further comprising storing an indication of the detected

manual activation of the EAS system in the POS terminal or the host system in response to receiving the transmitted indication.

55. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 52 and further comprising:

identifying an operator logged into the POS system at a time the manual activation of the EAS system is detected; and
storing an identifier of the identified operator in association with the stored indication of the manual activation.

56. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 52 and further comprising:

determining a date and time when the manual activation of the EAS system is detected; and storing the determined date and time in association with the stored indication of the manual activation.

57. (Currently amended) A host notification method for use in an electronic checkout system that includes an optical code data reader and an electronic article surveillance (EAS) system, the data reader and the EAS system coupled to an electronic point-of-sale (POS) terminal, the method comprising the following steps:

detecting a manual deactivation attempt of the EAS system;
determining whether deactivation attempt was successful;
if the deactivation attempt was successful, transmitting an indication of the manual deactivation to the POS terminal or host system, the indication of the manual deactivation including comprising a data code corresponding to a predetermined machine readable optical code.

Claims 58-59 (Canceled)

60. (Currently amended) A host notification method according to claim 57 wherein said predetermined optical code ~~encompasses~~ comprises a specially reserved universal product code.

61. (Previously presented) A host notification method according to claim 57 and further comprising, responsive to receiving the indication of the manual deactivation, creating a record of the manual deactivation event.

62. (Previously presented) A host notification method according to claim 57 and further comprising, in the POS, responsive to receiving the indication of the manual deactivation, transmitting a record of the manual deactivation event to a server or backroom controller.

Claims 63-66 (Canceled)

67. (Currently amended) A host communication method for use in an electronic checkout system that includes a data reader to acquire product identification and an electronic tag system, the data reader and the electronic tag system coupled to an electronic host system, the method comprising the following steps:

detecting a predetermined ~~special~~ event of the data reader or the electronic tag system;

selecting a data code corresponding to a machine readable, special optical code, ~~as a predetermined~~ the data code corresponding to the detected ~~special~~ event; and

transmitting the selected special optical code to the host system as a special code that does not identify a product.

68. (Currently amended) A host communication method according to claim 67 wherein the host system comprises a point-of-sale (POS) terminal.

69. (Currently amended) A host communication method according to claim 67 wherein the host system comprises a host computer.

70. (Currently amended) A host communication method according to claim 67 wherein the data reader comprises an optical scanner and the detected ~~special event~~ is an indication of a hardware failure status of the optical scanner.

71. (Currently amended) A host communication method according to claim 67 wherein the detected ~~special event~~ is a status of the electronic tag system.

72. (Currently amended) A host communication method according to claim 71 wherein the detected ~~predetermined~~ event comprises an electronic tag deactivation failed event.

73. (Currently amended) A host communication method according to claim 71 wherein the detected ~~predetermined~~ event comprises a successful deactivation event.

74. (Currently amended) A host communication method according to claim 71 wherein the detected predetermined EAS event comprises an attempted deactivation event.

75. (Currently amended) A host communication method according to claim 71 wherein the detected predetermined EAS event comprises a successful manual deactivation event.

76. (Currently amended) A host communication method according to claim 67 wherein the data reader comprises a plurality of sensors, and wherein the selected data code identifies detected event comprises which of the plurality of sensors acquired the product data.

77. (Currently amended) A host ~~notification~~communication method according to claim 67, further comprising for use in an electronic checkout system that includes a data reader system coupled to an electronic point of sale (POS) terminal, the method comprising the following steps:

- providing multiple sensor windows in the data reader system;
- reading data from an article via the data reader system;
- determining which of the multiple sensor windows was used to read the data; and
- capturing an indication of, wherein the detected event comprises which of the multiple sensor windows was used to read the data.

78. (Withdrawn) A method according to claim 77 and further comprising determining an indication of a position of the article responsive to the indication of which of the multiple sensor windows was used to read the data.

79. (Withdrawn) A method according to claim 77 and further comprising determining an indication of an orientation of the article responsive to the indication of which of the multiple sensor windows was used to read the data.

80. (Withdrawn) A method according to claim 77 and further comprising:

selecting a special optical code as a predetermined data code corresponding to the indication of which of the multiple sensor windows was used to read the label data; and

transmitting the selected special optical code to the host system as a special code that identifies which of the multiple sensor windows was used to read the label data.

81. (Withdrawn) A method according to claim 80 wherein the data reader system includes at least one optical sensor.

82. (Withdrawn) A method according to claim 80 wherein the data reader system includes at least one RFID sensor.

83. (Withdrawn) A method according to claim 80 wherein the POS terminal serves as the host.

84. (New) A method according to claim 53 wherein the step of transmitting an indication of the detected manual activation of the EAS system to the POS terminal or host system comprises (a) selecting a special data code, corresponding to a machine readable optical code but distinguishable by the POS terminal or host system from a product code, as a predetermined data code corresponding to the detected manual activation and (b) transmitting the special code from the data reader to the POS terminal or host system.

85. (New) A host communication method according to claim 67 wherein the detected event comprises a hardware failure.

86. (New) A host communication method according to claim 85 wherein the hardware failure comprises a failure in a power supply of the electronic tag system.